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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the magnet school concept as a potential approach for achieving school desegregation while producing educational and social benefits for white and minority students alike. The author begins by reviewing the history of school desegregation in North Carolina from 1954 to the present, then briefly discusses the birth of alternative educational programs in the state. The second half of the paper describes two successful magnet school programs in North Carolina, the extended day program at the Mary E. Phillips Elementary School in Raleigh and the talented and gifted program at the Lucille Hunter Elementary School in Raleigh. (JG)

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THE MAGNET SCHOOL CONCEPT IN NORTH CAROLINA

PRESENTATION AT THE

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The Magnet School Concept in North Carolina

The magnet school concept can best be viewed as a significant indicator of the belief held by many educators in North Carolina that there is no one best way to desegregate schools. The true measure of desegregation is not in the effort expended but the results achieved. No school system has relied solely upon this strategy; yet more and more LEAs are beginning to explore the concept as a way to move from the point of mandate desegregation toward the more idealist concept of voluntary desegregation.

Historical Background

The history of school desegregation in North Carolina began with the Brown decision of 1954 which declared that separate educational facilities were inherently unequal. Prior to this decision the state operated separate schools for Whites, Blacks and in some LEAs, Indians. Brown opened an era of speculation for our citizens. Some speculated that the ruling would not stand; some felt that it was too general to be meaningful; still others felt that since it was a Federal ruling, the national government lacked the commitment and/or authority to enforce it. This seemed a reasonable conclusion given the history of local autonomy over education.

In 1955, the Supreme Court ruled (Brown; 349 U.S.294 [1955]) that school boards in de jure school districts must make a "good faith start in the transformation from a dual to a unitary school system with all deliberate speed." North Carolina responded to this mandate, placing more emphasis upon "deliberate" than upon "speed," by adopting the concept of "freedom of choice."

UNDER FREEDOM OF CHOICE, MOST SCHOOL SYSTEMS PROVIDED IN THEIR POLICIES THAT ANY STUDENT MAY ELECT THE SCHOOL WHICH HE OR SHE WOULD ATTEND WITH TRANSPORTATION THERETO BEING PROVIDED AT PUBLIC EXPENSE. HOWEVER, THE RESULTS FELL SHORT OF THE GOAL. FROM 1955 THROUGH 1968 ONLY ABOUT 20% OF ALL MINORITY YOUTH IN NORTH CAROLINA HAD EXPERIENCED ATTENDANCE IN A SCHOOL WHERE THEIR RACE WAS IN A MINORITY, AND THERE WERE NO CASES ON RECORD WHERE A WHITE CHILD HAD CHOSEN TO ATTEND A PREVIOUSLY ALL-BLACK SCHOOL.

SEVERAL FEATURES OF FREEDOM OF CHOICE MADE IT SEEM LIKE A LOGICAL COURSE OF RESPONSIBLE ACTION. ONE WAS THE FACT THAT HAVING SELECTED A SCHOOL BY CHOICE, STUDENTS FREQUENTLY CAME WITH A GREATER COMMITMENT TO DO WELL AT SCHOOL. ALSO, THEIR PARENTS SEEMED MORE PRONE TO SUPPORT THE SCHOOL TO WHICH THEIR CHILDREN WERE ASSIGNED. SINCE MOST BLACK CHILDREN WHO TRANSFERRED TO PREVIOUSLY WHITE SCHOOLS CAME FROM SUPPORTIVE HOMES AND HAD GOOD EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUNDS, THEY FIT WELL INTO THEIR NEW SURROUNDINGS.

FREEDOM OF CHOICE DID GRAVE DAMAGE TO THE ALL-BLACK AND ALL INDIAN SCHOOLS. MANY OF THE HIGHER LEVEL ACADEMIC STUDENTS TRANSFERRED WHICH INSTANTLY LOWERED THE TEST SCORES, MODIFIED THE EDUCATIONAL CLIMATE NEGATIVELY AND REDUCED COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR THE BLACK AND INDIAN SCHOOLS. TOP BLACK AND INDIAN ATHLETES, SCHOLARS, AND STUDENT LEADERS LEFT, TAKING WITH THEM SCHOOL SPIRIT, PRIDE AND HERITAGE. THE BLACK AND INDIAN SCHOOLS IN MOST COMMUNITIES LOST THEIR LONG-STANDING POSITION AS THE CENTER OF COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES. AROUND 1969, THE MINORITY SCHOOL FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES DIED OF NATURAL CAUSES.

THE PERIOD FROM 1954 TO 1960 SAW RELATIVELY LITTLE REAL PROGRESS IN SCHOOL DESEGREGATION IN NORTH CAROLINA. RATHER, DELAY

TATICS WERE MORE COMMONPLACE THAN WERE GENUINE EFFORTS TO DEVELOP A PLAN FOR LASTING AND PERMANENT DESEGREGATION. HOWEVER, IN 1958, THE COURT DECLARED THAT THE COMMAND TO DESEGREGATE WITH ALL DELIBERATE SPEED COULD NOT BE POSTPONED BECAUSE OF PUBLIC HOSTILITY GENERATED BY COURT ORDERED DESEGREGATION (COOPER V. AARON; 358 U.S. 1 [1958]). THE COURT MADE CLEAR THAT STATE ACTION IN RESISTANCE TO DESEGREGATION DECREES WOULD BE FIRMLY CONDEMNED.

FOLLOWING COOPER, MANY SCHOOL BOARDS IN NORTH CAROLINA ADOPTED PLANS WHICH WERE MORE FORCEFUL THAN FREEDOM OF CHOICE BUT WHICH PROVIDED THAT ANY STUDENT MAY TRANSFER TO ANY SCHOOL IN THE SYSTEM WHICH MIGHT BETTER SERVE HIS OR HER SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS. IF, FOR EXAMPLE, ONE SCHOOL OFFERED CERTAIN SUBJECTS NOT AVAILABLE AT ANOTHER, THE STUDENT MIGHT DECLARE AN INTEREST IN THAT SUBJECT TO SUPPORT A REQUEST FOR TRANSFER. WHILE IT WAS NOT REFERRED TO AS SUCH, THIS WAS OUR BEGINNING OF THE MAGNET SCHOOL CONCEPT.

THE PERIOD FROM 1958 TO 1963 SAW RELATIVELY LITTLE COURT ACTIVITY. THE NATIONAL ATTITUDE WHICH PREVAILED WAS THAT SCHOOL SYSTEMS SHOULD "EXHAUST ALL ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES" TO BRING ABOUT DESEGREGATION BEFORE A COURT SHOULD INTERVENE. HOWEVER, THIS TREND WAS MODIFIED WHEN IN 1963 THE COURT HELD THAT ANY PLAN WHICH PERMITTED STUDENTS TO TRANSFER OUT OF THEIR ASSIGNED SCHOOL, IF THAT STUDENT WAS IN THE RACIAL MINORITY, VIOLATED THE EQUAL PROTECTION CLAUSE (GOSS V. BOARD OF EDUCATION; 373 U.S.683 ([1963]). IT FURTHER RULED THAT NO OFFICIAL TRANSFER PLAN WAS PERMISSIBLE UNDER THE FOURTEENTH AMENDMENT WHERE RACIAL SEGREGATION WAS THE INEVITABLE CONSEQUENCE.

DURING THIS SAME YEAR, THE COURT ELIMINATED THE NECESSITY FOR EXHAUSTING ALL ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES BEFORE SEEKING REDRESS IN

THE COURTS (McNEESE v. BOARD OF EDUCATION; 373 U.S.688 (1963]). THIS FOSTERED THE END OF THE USE OF BUREAUCRATIC PROCEDURES TO DELAY THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL DESEGREGATION.

THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964 WAS POSSIBLY THE SINGLE MOST SIGNIFICANT PIECE OF LEGISLATION IN THE PROCESS OF DESEGREGATION OF SCHOOLS. IT ESTABLISHED AN AFFIRMATIVE POSITION WITH SOME SUBSTANTIAL FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR PROGRAMS DEVELOPED TO EASE THE BURDEN OF MOVING FROM THE DUAL TO THE UNITARY SCHOOL. IT ALSO SPELLED OUT AN ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURE AND DEFINED LEVELS OF AUTHORITY TO EXECUTE THESE PROCEDURES.

THE NEXT THREE YEARS WERE DIFFICULT TIMES FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS IN NORTH CAROLINA. SUPERINTENDENTS WERE SOMETIMES CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF SOCIAL CHANGE, BETWEEN A SEGMENT OF THE COMMUNITY DEMANDING EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY AND ANOTHER SEGMENT DECLARING "THE MINORITY GROUP IS TAKING OVER." BOARDS WERE CONFRONTED BY THOSE CALLING FOR IMMEDIATE AND COMPLETE COMPLIANCE WITH THE LAW AND BY THOSE PROPOSING STALLING TACTICS. MOST OF THESE PEOPLE WERE SOLID CITIZENS ACTING IN GOOD FAITH, SUPPORTING POSITIONS THEY TRULY BELIEVED TO BE VALID.

SEVERAL NEW PRACTICES APPEARED DURING THIS PERIOD. ONE WAS THE TENDENCY OF CLOSING ALL-BLACK SCHOOLS AND SENDING THEIR STUDENTS TO THE FORMERLY ALL-WHITE SCHOOLS. ANOTHER WAS TO ELIMINATE BLACK SCHOOLS ONE GRADE AT A TIME. ANOTHER INVOLVED THE PRACTICE OF CONSOLIDATING SEVERAL SCHOOLS INTO ONE LARGE UNIT WITH THE SENIOR HIGH BEING HOUSED ON THE FORMERLY WHITE CAMPUS AND THE JUNIOR HIGH ON THE BLACK CAMPUS.

STILL ANOTHER APPROACH WAS TO PLACE SOME WHITE TEACHERS IN AN ALL-BLACK SCHOOL, SOMETIMES ALONG WITH A WHITE PRINCIPAL. THIS,

IT WAS HOPED, WOULD FOSTER GREATER COMMUNITY ACCEPTANCE AND SUPPORT. BLACK SCHOOLS BEGAN RECEIVING ATTENTION THE LIKES OF WHICH THEY HAD NEVER EXPERIENCED; NEW PROGRAMS OF INSTRUCTION, NEW ORGANIZATIONAL PATTERNS, NEW FURNITURE, REPAIRS AND CONSTRUCTION OF PHYSICAL FACILITIES, AND INCREASED PER PUPIL EXPENDITURES.

BY 1971, THE PROCESS OF DESEGREGATION SEEMED TO HAVE SETTLED SMOOTHLY INTO PLACE. ALL BUT 11 OF NORTH CAROLINA'S 154 LEAS WERE IN FULL COMPLIANCE. TEN OF THESE WERE IN VARIOUS STAGES OF LITIGATION AND THE OTHER HAD FILED ITS INTENTION TO COMPLY. THEN AROSE THE EMOTIONAL ISSUE OF "CROSS BUSING," AND IT SEEMED THAT WE WERE BACK WHERE WE HAD BEGUN IN 1954. THIS WAS FOLLOWED BY A PERIOD OF RACIAL AND SOCIAL UNREST DURING WHICH SCHOOLS WERE THE FOCAL POINT. THIS CLIMATE FOSTERED A TENDENCY TOWARD RESEGREGATION WITHIN THE DESEGREGATED SCHOOL. GROUPS TENDED TO POLARIZE ALONG RACIAL LINES AROUND EACH NEW ISSUE WHICH SURFACED. IN RESPONSE TO THIS CONDITION, EDUCATORS WERE LED TO INVESTIGATE ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF ACCOMPLISHING DESEGREGATION. IT BECAME APPARENT THAT RELYING ON THE LEGAL STRUCTURE AS <u>THE</u> REMEDY WAS NO LONGER FEASIBLE.

<u>THE BIRTH OF "ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION"</u>

SEVERAL SCHOOL PROGRAMS APPEARED IN NORTH CAROLINA IN THE EARLY 70S WHICH OFFERED A CHOICE TO STUDENTS FOR WHOM THE REGULAR SCHOOL PROGRAM WAS NOT A VALID LEARNING EXPERIENCE. EARLY ON, THESE PROGRAMS FOCUSED LARGELY ON THE NEEDS OF THE UNDERMOTIVATED, THE SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED OR THE DISRUPTIVE STUDENT. ONE PARTICULARLY POPULAR PROGRAM IS THE "EXTENDED DAY" CONCEPT. IN THIS PROGRAM, STUDENTS WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED PROBLEMS IN THE REGULAR SCHOOL PROGRAM ARE GIVEN HELP IN TARGETED AREAS. THE PROBLEMS

COVER A RANGE WHICH INCLUDES SOCIAL ADJUSTMENTS, ACADEMIC DIFFICULTIES, DOMESTIC PROBLEMS, ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES AND MARITAL AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES. THESE STUDENTS ATTEND AT A TIME MUTUALLY AGREEABLE TO THEM AND THE SCHOOL OFFICIALS, BUT ARE NOT RESTRICTED TO 6 CONTINUOUS HOURS OF CLASS ATTENDANCE. AN EFFORT IS MADE TO MAINTAIN THE INTEGRITY OF THE CURRICULUM AS IT APPLIES TO REGULAR STUDENTS.

ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE CONCEPT WHICH HAS ENJOYED SOME SUCCESS IS THE "SCHOOL WITHIN THE SCHOOL." IN THIS CONCEPT, A PARTICULAR PROGRAM IS STRESSED ON THE SITE OF A "REGULAR" SCHOOL, BUT THE SPECIAL PROGRAM IS INTENSIFIED TO THE DEGREE THAT IT OFFERS OPPORTUNITIES NOT AVAILABLE THROUGH THE GENERAL COURSE OF STUDIES. SUCH PROGRAMS ARE TO BE FOUND AT ALL GRADE LEVELS, 1-12, AND IN BOTH TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL SUBJECT AREAS. IN SOME OF THESE SCHOOLS, A STUDENT WHO EXCELLS IN A SPECIFIC AREA MAY TAKE ADVANCED COURSES IN THAT AREA WHILE MAINTAINING THE IDENTITY OF A "GENERAL" STUDENT. IN OTHER SCHOOLS, THE MAGNET BLOCK IS ISOLATED FROM THE GENERAL PROGRAM AND MAY HAVE A SEPARATE ADMINISTRATOR. STILL OTHERS TEND TO ISOLATE THEIR MAGNET STUDENTS FOR INTENSIFIED EXPERIENCES FOR THE TOTAL SCHOOL DAY.

ONE SEEMINGLY SUCCESSFUL MAGNET SCHOOL IS THE MARY E. PHILLIPS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN THE WAKE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM. LOCATED IN RALEIGH, IT SERVES AS AN EXTENDED DAY MAGNET FOR STUDENTS IN KINDERGARTEN THROUGH FIFTH GRADE. THE SCHOOL OPENS EACH DAY AT 7:00 A.M. AND CLOSES AT 6:00 P.M., MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY. DURING THE NORMAL SCHOOL HOURS IT OFFERS A REGULAR BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM IN ALL ACADEMIC AREAS, CONSISTENT IN SCOPE WITH ALL OTHER SCHOOLS IN THE WAKE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM. A NORMAL

STAFF OF PROFESSIONALS IS ASSIGNED AS IN ALL OTHER SCHOOLS. HOWEVER, THE TEACHERS ASSIGNED ARE FROM AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO WORK WITH THIS PROGRAM.

CHILDREN MAY BE BROUGHT TO SCHOOL BEFORE THE REGULAR SCHOOL HOURS AND MAY REMAIN AFTER SCHOOL FOR THE EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM. SUPERVISED DEVELOPMENTAL AND ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES ARE SUPERVISED BY PROFESSIONAL AND TRAINED STAFF. AMONG THE ACTIVITIES OFFERED ARE MUSIC, ART, DANCE, DRAMA, INDIVIDUAL TUTORING, INDEPENDENT STUDY, GYMNASTICS, SOCIAL GROUP GAMES AND DEVELOPING SKILLS IN SPORTS.

THE SCHOOL'S PTA IS SO CONSTRUCTED AS TO ALLOW AND ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THE PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION OF THE EXTENDED DAY ACTIVITIES.

THE INITIAL STAFFING PLAN FOR THE SCHOOL CALLED FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF ONE ADMINISTRATOR (WHO WOULD ALSO SERVE AS COUNSELOR IN THE REGULAR SCHOOL, BEGINNING AT 10:00 A.M.) TO COORDINATE IN-SERVICE FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT, SUPERVISE SCHEDULING AND PLANNING OF ACTIVITIES AND TO WORK WHEN NEEDED WITH INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP ACTIVITIES. FIVE TEACHERS WERE TO BE EMPLOYED. THEIR AREAS OF COMPETENCY MUST BE EITHER EARLY CHILDHOOD, INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION, PHYSICAL EDUCATION, ART OR MUSIC. EACH TEACHER WOULD COORDINATE AND SUPERVISE A STUDENT UNIT. TWO TEACHER AIDES WOULD BE ASSIGNED TO EACH UNIT. IN ADDITION, FOUR TRAINEES FROM LOCAL COLLEGES WOULD BE ASSIGNED TO EACH UNIT.

THE COST FOR THE EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM IS SHARED BY THE PARENTS WHO PAY $10 A WEEK FOR ONE CHILD, $9 PER WEEK FOR THE SECOND AND $8 PER WEEK FOR EACH ADDITIONAL CHILD THEY HAVE IN THE EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM. THE COST OF UTILITIES IS PAID BY THE SCHOOL

SYSTEM.

THIS PARTICULAR PROGRAM HAS ITS GREATEST APPEAL TO ONE-PARENT FAMILIES AND TO FAMILIES WHEREIN BOTH PARENTS WORK AWAY FROM HOME. THE SCHOOL'S PRINCIPAL, DR. MARY MAYESKY, WHO IS HERSELF A DIVORCED PARENT OF A FIVE-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER, REPORTS THAT OF THE SCHOOL'S 165 STUDENTS, 119 OF THEM LIVE WITH ONE PARENT OR WITH TWO WORKING PARENTS.

THE PHILLIPS SCHOOL IS LOCATED IN A PREDOMINATELY BLACK NEIGHBORHOOD. LAST YEAR, ABOUT 200 OF ITS 290 STUDENTS WERE BUSED FROM OTHER NEIGHBORHOODS TO PROVIDE RACIAL BALANCE EQUAL TO THAT OF THE SYSTEM-WIDE RATIO OF 70 PERCENT WHITE. THIS YEAR, THE CHILDREN FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD WALK, BUT THE WHITE STUDENTS ARE DRIVEN EACH DAY BY THEIR PARENTS. NO STUDENTS ARE BUSED TO PHILLIPS. BOTH THE STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS HAVE EXPRESSED PUBLICLY THEIR DELIGHT OVER THE PROGRAM. THE OFFICIALS OF OTHER SCHOOL SYSTEMS ARE LOOKING CLOSELY AT THIS PROGRAM TO SEE IF IT HAS POTENTIAL IN THEIR OWN LEA.

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL MAGNET SCHOOL IS THE LUCILLE HUNTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, ALSO LOCATED IN A FORMERLY ALL-BLACK FACILITY IN A PREDOMINATELY BLACK SECTION OF RALEIGH. NEVERTHELESS, THERE WERE MORE THAN THREE APPLICATIONS FOR EACH OF THE 150 OPENINGS THIS FALL IN ITS MAGNET PROGRAM. HUNTER OFFERS REGULAR CLASSES FOR SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS, BUT OFFERS A SPECIAL PROGRAM FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS AT GRADE LEVELS FOUR, FIVE AND SIX.

THE CHILDREN CHOSEN TO ATTEND HUNTER WERE SELECTED BY COMPUTER FROM AMONG THE MOST MOTIVATED LEARNERS IN THE WAKE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM. ALTHOUGH I.Q. WAS NOT A FACTOR IN THE SELECTION OF STUDENTS, THE ESTIMATED NORM OF THE SCHOOL, ACCORDING

TO MS. CELIA WOLFE, WHO IS COORDINATOR OF THE PROGRAM, IS AROUND 128.

IN SELECTING STUDENTS FOR THE PROGRAM, ALL THIRD, FOURTH, AND FIFTH GRADE CHILDREN WHO WOULD BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE MAGNET SCHOOL WERE GIVEN THE RENZULLI-HARTMAN STANDARDIZED TEST DESIGNED TO MEASURE LEARNING, MOTIVATION, CREATIVITY AND LEADERSHIP. THE CHILDREN'S MATH AND READING GRADES WERE EVALUATED ALONG WITH TEST SCORES TO JUDGE THEIR LEARNING POTENTIAL. THEN ALL CLASSES WERE ASKED TO LIST THE BRIGHTEST CHILDREN IN THE ROOM FOR A PEER GROUP RANKING ON LEADERSHIP ABILITY. USING THESE CRITERIA, THE FIELD WAS NARROWED TO 2,000 CHILDREN FROM WHICH NUMBER 500 APPLIED FOR ADMISSION. THE COMPUTER WAS THEN PROGRAMMED TO SELECT 150 STUDENTS ON A RANDOM BASIS WITH RATIO OF 70% WHITE AND 30% BLACK.

CONVERSATIONS WITH TEACHERS, STUDENTS AND PARENTS OF THE HUNTER SCHOOL LEAD TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE CONCEPT IS WORKING, AT LEAST FOR THOSE INVOLVED. THE STUDENTS HAVE HAD SUCH PROJECTS AS THE CONSTRUCTION OF A MODEL CITY, THE STUDY OF SOLAR ENERGY, THE WRITING AND PRODUCTION OF A MUSICAL PLAY, THE PREPARATION OF A DISPLAY ON HOW TO BUILD A ROCKET AND THE WRITING OF ESSAYS INVOLVING CRITICAL THINKING. ONE 11 YEAR-OLD STUDENT IS WORKING ON A PROJECT TO TRY TO PREDICT THE NEXT ICE AGE.

THE PROGRAM DRAWS HEAVILY UPON COMMUNITY RESOURCES SUCH AS VOLUNTEER PERSONNEL, SPEAKERS FROM AMONG THE RANKS OF LOCAL PROFESSIONALS AND UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS AND PARENTS OF THE CHILDREN. DRAWING UPON THESE RESOURCES, THE SCHOOL HAS RECENTLY HELD A SERIES OF SEMINARS ON SUCH SUBJECTS AS SOLAR ENERGY, NEWSPAPERS, GENEALOGY, DEBATING, PHOTOGRAPHY, ARCHEOLOGY, CREATIVE WRITING AND MILITARY HISTORY.

THE EXPRESSED GOAL OF THIS PROGRAM IS TO EXCITE THE INTELLIGENT CHILD ABOUT LEARNING. ITS PHILOSOPHY IS THAT THE TEACHING OF CRITICAL THINKING ENABLES A CHILD TO GO BEYOND THE MERE LEARNING OF INFORMATION INTO THE MORE ADVANCED ACTIVITY OF APPLYING CONCEPTS.

THERE ARE MANY OTHER MAGNET PROGRAMS IN NORTH CAROLINA WHICH ARE ENJOYING AS MUCH SUCCESS AS ARE THE TWO SCHOOLS HEREIN DISCUSSED. OTHERS ARE AT VARIOUS STAGES OF PROGRESS, WHILE SOME SCHOOL SYSTEMS ARE STILL EVALUATING THE CONCEPT. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE CONCEPT OF MAGNET SCHOOLS OFFERS AT LEAST ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE FOR MEETING THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF CERTAIN CHILDREN IN MORE MEANINGFUL WAYS.

THE PRESENT TREND IN NORTH CAROLINA IS CLEARLY TOWARD COMPLETE AND TOTAL INTEGRATION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS. AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF ITS PEOPLE BELIEVE THAT NO ONE SHOULD BE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST BECAUSE OF THEIR RACE, SEX OR NATIONAL ORIGIN. THERE IS STILL A SERIOUS GULF BETWEEN THE INTELLECTUAL ACCEPTANCE OF DESEGREGATION AND THE EMOTIONAL REACTION TO ONE'S OWN CHILD BEING BUSED OUT OF ONE'S NEIGHBORHOOD TO ACHIEVE DESEGREGATION. ANY FUTURE PLAN FOR DESEGREGATION MUST PROMISE REALISTICALLY TO ACHIEVE SOME WORTHWHILE GOAL. IT MUST HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO PRODUCE EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL BENEFITS FOR MINORITY STUDENTS WITHOUT DECREASING THOSE BENEFITS NOW AVAILABLE TO WHITE STUDENTS. MAGNET SCHOOLS MAY HAVE THIS POTENTIAL.